



PILGRIMS' WAY
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Young Carers Policy

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Next review due: Nov 2026

1. Introduction

At Pilgrims' Way Primary School, we believe every child has the right to a full and enriching education to ensure they reach their academic potential, regardless of their home circumstances. We recognise some of the barriers our children experience, and we actively seek to address these. We also celebrate the huge achievements of our young caring children. Some children take on caring responsibilities for family members with long-term physical or mental health conditions, disabilities, or substance misuse issues. These pupils may need extra support to thrive and achieve in school. We recognise the achievements of these children. This policy outlines how we identify, support, advocate, and celebrate Young Carers in our school community.

2. Defining a Young Carer

A Young Carer is a child under 18 who provides care - physical, emotional, or supervisory - for a family member with a disability, illness, or addiction. This responsibility often exceeds what is typical for their age and can impact their wellbeing, education, and social development. While many pupils are cared for by adults, we remain vigilant in identifying those who may take on caring roles now or in the future.

3. Identifying a Young Carer

Young Carers may not disclose their role due to fear of stigma or intrusion. Staff should be alert to signs such as:

- Frequent lateness or unexplained absences
- Fatigue or lack of concentration
- Anxiety, worry, or underachievement
- Behavioural challenges or emotional outbursts
- Limited peer relationships but maturity beyond their years
- Over-eagerness to help or take on responsibilities
- Bullying linked to family circumstances
- Avoidance of extracurricular activities

- Inconsistent homework completion
- Minimal family engagement with school

These indicators may stem from various causes, but staff should sensitively explore whether a caring role is involved. Concerns should be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and recorded using 'My Concern' safeguarding software.

All young carers are formally recorded on our pupil management information systems.

4. Responding to Concerns

All staff have a responsibility for supporting our young carers. Concerns about a possible Young Carer should be referred to the Family Liaison Officer (FLO), who leads our Young Carers support. The FLO will assess:

- Whether the pupil's responsibilities exceed typical family dynamics
- Whether external support services are involved or required to help support the pupil and/or family and reduce the reliance on the pupil

We respect families' privacy and seek consent before sharing information, unless safeguarding procedures require otherwise.

5. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

We follow safeguarding procedures when a Young Carer is at risk. Information is shared only with those who need it to provide support, and always with consent unless safety is a concern.

6. School Support for Identified Young Carers

We are committed to providing tailored support, including:

- FLO as the named contact for Young Carers and their families
- Weekly lunchtime drop-in groups for Years 3–6 (Year 2 pupils welcome if appropriate). Termly the Canterbury Young Carer co-ordinator will call in to see the children.
- Open-door access to FLO for informal chats or guidance
- Awareness sessions through assemblies and staff training
- Private conversations with the FLO and our Young Carers, respecting their confidentiality
- Flexible absence coding and communication with families
- Liaison with external services to ensure families can be advised where additional help may be available to them
- Alternative arrangements for parent meetings when needed
- Advice on transport options for pupils with caring responsibilities
- Logging Young Carers on our school management information system for continuity of support

- School will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.
- **7. Transition and Future Planning**

We support Young Carers as they prepare for secondary school by:

- Facilitating discussions about future goals and concerns
- Ensuring smooth handover of support information to new schools
- Encouraging aspirations and resilience through mentoring and guidance

8. Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

We promote wellbeing through:

- Access to school-based or external mental health support
- Mindfulness and resilience-building activities
- Staff training to recognise emotional impacts of caring

9. Academic Achievement

All class teachers are aware of which children in their class are young carers. Their progress is monitored alongside SLT in pupil progress meetings.

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We offer:

- Adjusted homework deadlines or formats
- Catch-up sessions or tutoring
- Understanding and flexibility around academic expectations

10. Family Engagement

We foster open communication with families by:

- Hosting information sessions about Young Carers
- Signposting adult services to reduce pupil burden
- Encouraging collaborative problem-solving

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12. Celebrating Young Carers

We recognise Young Carers' contributions through:

- Awards, assemblies, and newsletters
- Opportunities to share experiences in safe, empowering ways

- Bespoke enrichment opportunities

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

We regularly review this policy and its impact by:

- Gathering feedback from pupils and families
- Tracking attendance, wellbeing, and academic progress
- Reporting to the Local Academy Committee on the implementation and impact of our policy
- Updating practices based on evolving needs

14. Legal Framework

- **Children Act 2004:** Young Carers may be considered 'children in need' and entitled to assessment.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Young Carers are protected due to their association with a disabled family member.
- **Children and Families Act 2014:** Local authorities must identify and support Young Carers.

15. Kent Young Carers (Imago)

The school works in partnership with Kent Young Carers (KYC) supports children aged 5–18 who care for family members with long-term needs. Services include:

- Identification and assessment
- One-to-one and group support
- School-based interventions
- Professional training

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